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RISK MANAGEMENT

THE PORT AUTHORITY OF NY & NJ

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bob DiChiara
FROM: Alan Reiss
DATE: June 3, 1993
SUBJECT: INTER AGENCY CRITIQUE OF FEBRUARY 26, 1993 BY N.Y.C. OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

REF:

COPY TO: T. Cancelliere, N. Chanfrau, C. Maikish, M. Regan, Lt. H. Gabora, Capt. J. Martella

I attended the inter agency critique at 1 Police Plaza on the morning of May 25, 1993, representing the Port Authority Civilian side. Lt. Gabora represented the P.A. Police side. Most comments were constructive and all agreed the incident was handled almost like a text book. Only N.Y.C.D.O.T. criticized us for keeping streets and lanes closed too long, utilizing their tow trucks which deprived the City of revenue, and general criticism for P.A. not following codes. I rebutted with our past and new policy related to code compliance and our relationship with N.Y.F.D. The N.Y.F.D. Manhattan Borough Commander also spoke up saying how safe we were, how he wished other land lords would retrofit with sprinklers, and with all we've done we'll be the safest building in N.Y.C.

The meeting was called and hosted by Deputy Inspector Lafey. A short summary of key points follows:

- o N.Y.C.E.M.S. - 1st time N.Y.C. has ever asked another jurisdiction for help. It was unprecedented. No formal mutual aid pack existed, now being done. 174 ambulances responded, 12 from N.Y.C. Volunteer Ambulance Corps., 49 commercial ambulances, 55 basic life support from N.J., 7 advanced life support from N.J. N.Y.C. was only 23% of response.

- o Set up Wintergarden as triage area, over 700 processed. Next time they would like to air drop paramedics to roof to stabilize patients. No communications in subgrade. Need to let tow trucks in, ambulances do break down.

- o N.Y.F.D. - felt it went well. The protocol for helicopter operation over stated and addressed. It is squared away.

- o N.Y.C.D.E.P. - The lack of electricity hampered sampling. Many thanks to the P.A. for help in sampling - joint effort. Problems communicating with staff in building with radios.

- N.Y.C. Transit Police - Initial call, unknown if in subway or in WTC. All emergency units city wide dispatched to WTC except for one unit per borough. They were here for eight hours assisting in search and evacuation. They tied in with P.A. Police for communications. No accountability for who searched which floor during primary search. Secondary search very coordinated. All transit was impacted due to shutdown south of 34th Street.

- Office of Emergency Management - They recommended coordinating via 800 MHZ system run by NYC. Each agency has 800 MHZ capability for dispatch and senior staff.

- Department of Building - played a minimal role but needed radios

- Sanitation - Minimal role due to interior damage, provided salt spreaders and manned Command Center around the clock.

- N.Y.C.D.O.T. - Mr. Lambros started out by describing how we interrupted his trip to Atlantic City that afternoon. He closed Battery Tunnel and Gowanus to all traffic except emergency vehicles. They froze Canal St. to Rector St. on west side. Felt Police, Fire, EMS, did a fantastic job.

- They towed 400 cars out of garage to Red Hook rather than tow cars to pound and make $150 per car, he felt West Street should have been opened sooner and P.A. used the excuse of crime scene. (Inspector Lafey explained why he over ruled DOT). He felt that we should have had 3 lanes on West Street sooner.

- He then launched into a lecture about how we should be forced to comply with City laws. As previously mentioned I replied and so did NYFD Chief Cerrata who explained we followed code or did an equivalent. Finally, he asked why DOT was never invited to any of the parties.

- Con Ed - Set up corporate emergency center and local command post.

- N.Y. Telephone - The cell site became overloaded. They brought in land lines to help out and installed cell repeater inside WTC. They need a single point contact at O.E.M. The mutual aid pact between telecommunications vendors were well, first time actuated.

- O.E.M. - Deputy Inspector Lafey thanked Con Ed, NY Telephone, and PA publicly - any request make was done rapidly.

- N.Y.C.T.A. - went very smooth. They supplied 6 generators used on B2. Their pumps pumped out roughly 2 million gallons from B6.

- Salvation Army - arrived at scene 12:55. Largest response in 25 years and 1st Mutual Aid from N.J. In the first four hours had 3 canteens, communication vehicle, and support unit. Total response was 8 canteens. They served over 20,000 servings. NY Telephone provided phones along with Merrill Lynch. Very smooth operation compared to other City incidents. They thanked P.A. for cooperation and prompt supply of water.

- Mayor's Office of Operations - hundreds of letters of praise received including Cardinal, Pope, and heads of state.

- American Red Cross - staffed 24 hour operation for 1 week. 8,000 meals served. Hundreds of coats and blankets supplied to EMS. They also got people home whose cars were destroyed. They also provided stress counseling and funeral assistance to families.

- P.A.P.D. - discussed they need better coordination of what offices and elevators were searched. Suggested that searchers carry chalk and mark doors. One problem that day was speed of information re: information overload. Finally, Lt. Gabora suggested other agencies should get to know their neighbors prior to an emergency.

- W.T.C. Operations - I discussed the numerous enhancements either underway or completed to the WTC. Also Kroll and Rolf Jensen studies underway. The periodic meetings with N.Y.F.D. and orientation tours were quite useful. Some Chiefs showed up with subgrade schematics from past tours. We need better full size prints though for N.Y.F.D. to assist in search and rescue. We need to explore better coordination between NYFD and Otis elevator. Some elevators were checked at least 3 times. (I have asked P. LaGow to check with his California counterparts on how they handled earth quakes).

- I also asked Deputy Inspector Lafey to have his radio staff contact me to discuss emergency communications.

- In closing, Deputy Inspector Lafey commented on information overload, even Chief Fusco of NYFD at times felt overwhelmed. All key department heads were at scene and met periodically. There was difficulty in passing information up and down. Never the less it was as close a textbook case as possible.

Alan Reiss
Special Assistant to the
Director